

## 2. BEHAVIOUR OF THE FEMALE OF *TAPHOZOUS MELANOPOGON* (TEMMINCK) AFTER PARTURITION

*Taphozous melanopogon* lives in colonies of about 100 to 500 specimens. The species is common in and around Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, and inhabits old temples and caves.

While studying the breeding habits and associated phenomena in this species, some interesting observations were made regarding the behaviour of the female trying to recover its accidentally separated young.

*Taphozous melanopogon* (Khaparde *in press*) breeds once a year in a restricted period, bringing forth a single young during each cycle. The embryo is borne in the right cornu of the uterus. Pregnancy commences from about the third week of January. Parturition occurs between the 20th of May and 10th of June.

Out of seven females collected on 2-vi-1974 from an old temple at Bhubaneswar three had delivered each carrying a single young attached to the breast, while four others were at an advanced stage of pregnancy. The specimens were caught by a large butterfly net attached to a bamboo. The specimens were then transferred into small collection bags. While keeping the specimens in the collection bags, one of the females with a newly born young attached to the breast escaped and attached herself to the wall of the temple. The young lost its hold on the mother, and fell on an adjacent projection on the wall of the temple. The young made chirping noise, which the mother answered similarly and moved towards and around the young to recover it.

The young one could not get hold of the mother in spite of the various attempts made by the mother to recover it.

Another female which was also carrying a newly born young attached to the breast was

released by me to observe if it would help the previous female in any way. The second female remained attached for sometime to the wall of the temple at a close distance from the first female. Then it flew into the temple. After sometime the first female which had lost her young also flew into the temple. The young bat was collected and preserved in 10 per cent formalin.

Gopalakrishna & Madhavan (1971) while studying parturition in *Pipistrellus ceylonicus chrysothrix* stated that, "In a few cases freshly delivered young had accidentally dropped from their mothers, sometimes with the umbilical cord and the placenta attached. The mothers do not make any attempts to recover such young."

Similar observations were made by Anand Kumar (1965) about *Rhinopoma kinneari*, in which he observed that, the mothers do not retrieve the young if they fall to the floor during parturition.

Observations of Gopalakrishna & Madhavan (1971) and of Anand Kumar (1965) are of females which lost their young during parturition, whereas the present observations on *Taphozous melanopogon* concern a female which had already delivered before it was caught.

The above observations on *Taphozous melanopogon* show that the mother does make efforts to recover the separated young if it is nearby and calls.

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